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TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, MO, UNSC, IS, IZ, MILI

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN REACTION TO UNSC VOTE CONDEMNING ISRAELI RAID

1. MOROCCAN PRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION HAS FOCUSSED IN RECENT DAYS ON RIOTING IN CASABLANCA, PRE-SUMMIT MANEUVERING AMONG DELEGATIONS TO THE NAIROBI OAU CONCLAVE, LIBYAN DIVERSIONS AND DELEGATIONS, AND FRENCH ELECTION RESULTS; THE ATTENTION WHICH NORMALLY WOULD HAVE BEEN PAID TO UNSC DELIBERATIONS AND VOTING ON THE RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL HAS BEEN DISTRACTED. MOST JOURNALS HAVE CARRIED WIRE SERVICE COPY WITHOUT COMMENT, NOTING PARTICULARLY THE REPORTED OBSERVATION OF THE KUWAITI FOREIGN MINISTER THAT AN ARAB SUMMIT IN RABAT MIGHT BE HELD FURTHER TO CONDEMN THE ISRAEL ACTION.

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2. THE FRENCH-LANGUAGE ORGAN OF THE NATIONALIST AND VIRULENTLY ANTI-ZIONIST ISTIQLAL PARTY DEVOTED MOST OF THE BACK PAGE OF ITS JUNE 21 ISSUE TO THE UNSC VOTE. GROUPED UNDER A HEADLINE ASSERTING THAT THE UNSC HAD CONDEMNED ONLY THE "STRAW MAN," THE NEWSPAPER "L'OPINION" PRINTED AN AFP DISPATCH ON THE VOTE, INCLUDING LENGTHY EXCERPTS FROM PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE KIRKPATRICK'S STATEMENT; A CARTOON DEPICTING PRESIDENT REAGAN WHISPERING TO PREMIER BEGIN THAT THE US ACTION WAS MEANT ONLY "FOR THE GALLERY;" A PRECIS OF PRESS COMMENTARY FROM THE GULF CONCLUDING THAT THE UNSC ACTION WAS A NEW "SETBACK FOR THE ARABS;" AND A COLUMN ENTITLED "INSUFFICIENT*" BY REGULAR "L'OPINION" CONTRIBUTOR KHALID JAMAI. JAMAI ARGUED THAT THE ARAB STRATEGY OF SEEKING TO AVOID AN AMERICAN VETO OF AN OVERLY-STRONG RESOLUTION WAS CORRECT,

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IN THAT IT HAD LED THE US TO MODIFY THE INITIAL POSITION TAKEN BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS (LOCALLY MISREPORTED) PRESS CONFERENCE AND DEPRIVED ISRAEL OF AN OPPORTUNITY TO DRIVE A WEDGE FURTHER BETWEEN THE US AND THE ARABS. JAMAI SAID THAT THE ARABS SHOULD BUILD ON THEIR NOW-DEMONSTRATED ABILITY TO MODIFY US POLICY, FAILING WHICH THE STRATEGY THEY HAD ADOPTED AT NEW YORK WILL HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO HAVE BEEN INSUFFICIENT.

3. COMMENT: HAVING INFORMALLY BUT FORCEFULLY LOBBIED THE EMBASSY IN FAVOR OF A STIFF US LINE ON THE ISRAELI RAID, THE MOROCCANS CAN BE PRESUMED HAPPY THAT A MEANS WAS FOUND AT NEW YORK TO ASSOCIATE THE US WITH UNANIMOUS UNSC CRITICISM OF ISRAEL AND TO AVOID THEREBY UNWANTED TENSION IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND SUCH ARAB MODERATES AS MOROCCO.

SEBASTIAN